

# Birth of Samuel

1 Samuel 1:1—2:11

Main Street



## bible verse

COMMITTING TO MEMORY

### Psalm 37:4

Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart.



## story lesson

BIBLE STORY

The books of Samuel record Israel's development from a tribal confederacy to a monarchy, emphasizing God's perspective on the kingship's of Saul and David, for the purpose of explaining what God really wants in a king. These next two major accounts of the history of the people of Israel contain the records of three key players: Samuel, Saul, and David.

Samuel arrives on the scene as the last Judge. He puts down the oppression from the Philistines and lives and rules under the appointment of Yahweh. However, when Samuel gets older and his sons are looking to lead, the people resist because Samuel's sons are not so righteous—in fact they are wicked. So the people of Israel ask for a king—an anointed ruler who will regulate the twelve tribes and be in charge of the military. Saul is chosen, and he becomes the first king of Israel. In essence, the people of Israel rejected God as their king and chose a human being instead. It could be argued that Yahweh eventually wanted Israel to have a king (to point people to Jesus, the True King), but nonetheless, it was a wicked thing the Israelites did in choosing a king at the wrong time. Saul was a powerful king, but he did not listen to the commands of Yahweh. So his sons and daughters were cut off from ever ruling the land of Israel. David, the shepherd boy, was then anointed by Samuel as the next king of Israel, but this did not take effect for some time. Meanwhile, Saul hunted David because he was such a threat to him. David won favor with the people and Saul was very jealous of that favor. Many mighty men joined David's followers. At the end of 1 Samuel, Saul and his son Jonathan are killed in battle. The opening of 2 Samuel describes David's ascension to the throne of Judah and eventually the whole land of Israel.

The second installment of Samuel focuses on the life of King David. The record contains God's promise to David that He will build a house for him and that his seed will come and be The Anointed One (that's Jesus). 2 Samuel tells of David's victories as well as some of his defeats; his successes and his failures; his ups and his downs. David is the man after God's heart, and we can all learn from his life.

And here is the story of Samuel's birth:

Elkanah son of Jeroham had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. Although Peninnah had children and Hannah did not, Elkanah favored Hannah. Much to Hannah's dismay and shame, she could not bare children because her womb was barren. Peninnah ridiculed and provoked Hannah because she could not provide children to Elkanah. Hannah would weep whenever Elkanah would take them yearly to the house of the LORD and she would not eat. Elkanah tried to comfort Hannah with no success.

Once, when they went up to Shiloh to the house of the LORD, Hannah went before the LORD "in bitterness of soul, wept, and prayed to the LORD" (1 Samuel 1:10). Hannah made a vow saying: "O LORD Almighty, if you will only look upon your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head" (1 Samuel 1:11).

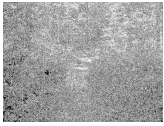
Wow! That is one deep promise. Eli, the priest, was sitting on a chair by the door post of the LORD's temple (tabernacle) and he observed Hannah moving her mouth, but he heard no words. "Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving but her voice was not heard. Eli thought she was drunk and said to her, 'How long will you keep on getting drunk? Get rid of your wine'" (1 Samuel 1:13-14). Hannah quickly told Eli that she was not drunk, only pouring out her soul before the LORD in anguish and grief. Eli answered as any good pastor would, "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him" (1 Samuel 1:17). Hannah went her way, ate something, and she was no longer downcast. Elkanah and his family left the house of the LORD the next day for their home in Ramah.

The biblical account tells us: "Elkanah lay with Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembered her. So in the course of time Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, 'because I asked the LORD for him'" (1 Samuel 1:19-20). So the barren womb of a woman opened up and conceived a child. Hannah weaned and raised Samuel until he was of age and then she took him up to Eli at Shiloh, where the house of the LORD was, and she gave Samuel up to the LORD. "So now I give him to the LORD...for his whole life he will be given over to the LORD" (1 Samuel 1:28).

Then, the author of books of Samuel does a strange thing, he records a prayer-song—Hannah's prayer-song. Theologians drool over these kinds of things that Scripture displays. Basically this prayer does a lot of foreshadowing about Jesus the Messiah... something that is definitely very far down the line from here, but the Lord gives Hannah insight and wisdom beyond herself. This prayer-song is an example of what we think inspiration in Scripture looks like—a willing vessel of God who allows herself to see and speak things that transcend a natural understanding, but trusts and believes in a supernatural, spiritual understanding.

“...but the boy ministered before the Lord under Eli the priest” (1 Samuel 2:11).

Scripture is full of this “barren womb” theme. Sarah, Abraham’s wife in Genesis; Rachel, Jacob’s wife in Genesis; Samson’s parents, Manoah and his wife in Judges; Hannah, Elkanah’s wife in Samuel; and Elizabeth, Zachariah’s wife in Luke. All of these women had barren wombs and yet God opened them to allow some significant, powerful, divine things to happen. This theme is prevalent throughout Scripture to show the sovereignty and power of God to intervene in the course of human events to accomplish his purposes.



## life application

MAKING IT REAL

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### Ask and You Shall Receive

Hannah prayed diligently and with passion for the desire of her heart—a child. Because of her faithfulness and her fervent heart God gave her the desire of her heart—a child. What are some things that are desires of your heart? Have you asked God for them? Are you delighting yourself in the Lord? Are you His child first? Are you asking for things for yourself? Or for other people? Remember: the Bible tells us that if we do not ask, then we do not receive. Try asking the Lord for what you have on your heart.

### Excellent Character

Hannah did not respond negatively to Peninnah when she taunted and provoked her. Instead, she brought the matter before the Lord. How do you respond when people laugh and make fun of you? Do you do that to people? Why? What should you do when someone is not being nice to you? Who should you go to? As a Jesus follower we are encouraged to show the world what God is like. The way we respond to things that happen to us, good or bad, is often really hard, but doable!



## questions

REMEMBERING

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- 1. What did Hannah ask God to give her?** A son
- 2. What did Hannah name her son?** Samuel
- 3. Where was Samuel taken when he was young?** Samuel was given to the Lord, to Eli the priest at Shiloh, the Temple or tabernacle of God
- 4. Why did Samuel's mom, Hannah, hand Samuel over to Eli?** Because she promised God that if He gave her a son, she would dedicate him over to the Lord. And that meant that the son would serve in the house of the Lord with the priest
- 5. What do you think Samuel was thinking or feeling when his mom dropped him off?**



## coloring sheet

ON THE NEXT PAGE

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**Birth of Samuel**